

## Real Stories of Young Entrepreneurs in Wisconsin

**Name:** Sean Maloney

**School & Grade:** 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Madison West High School

**Business Name:** ElectroSage LLC

### **What inspired you to start your business? Tell us about your inspiration, your idea and how it became a reality.**

I first became interested in electronics in 6<sup>th</sup> grade when I got my first iPod Touch. Apple was running a promotion and with each iMac sold they buyer got an iPod. My father got an iMac for the family and my sisters and got the iPod to share. Thus started my journey into the vast world of iTech.

Not long after we received it I jailbroke the iPod; a modification that allowed it to run on unapproved 3<sup>rd</sup> party software. I learned to do this from a tutorial on *You Tube*. This encouraged me. I was now on my way. I watched *You Tube* videos on iPod and iPhone disassembly and assembly. I was hooked. I then bought my first iPhone off eBay. It was an old iPhone 3G that had a crack in the back and a broken vibrator motor. Using my newfound skills I soon repaired and resold it making money along the way. I was ready to take the next step.

At the ripe age of 14, 8<sup>th</sup> grade, I launched *iPhone Fixes on the Cheap*. I started out repairing iPhones with various problems. I replaced batteries, screens, buttons, cameras, and more. Slowly I gained customers as I completed more and more repairs. I learned HTML and designed my first web site ([www.iphonefixesonthecheap.com](http://www.iphonefixesonthecheap.com)) from scratch. Soon afterwards I expanded my repairs to include iPods and iPads. I changed my name to iFixes on the Cheap.

With my new name I expanded my knowledge of HTML, and web hosting and redesigned my website. I started advertising more aggressively through Craigslist, flyers, and business cards. With all this new advertising I also opened my online store, which allowed me to offer iTech repairs nationwide. I was now 15 and had my sights set on a new market and new business plan. I wanted not only to be in the business of tech repair but also tech resale. It was not long before I ceased doing repairs altogether and concentrated solely on the more profitable resale market. In January 2013 I again changed my name, this time to *ElectroSage*, and became a Wisconsin Limited Liability Company ("LLC").

### **Describe your product / service, purpose / goals, features / benefits, unique selling point.**

*ElectroSage LLC* (formally *iFixes on the Cheap*) has the main focus of buying and selling old or unused electronics; especially Apple, Samsung, HTC, Motorola, and Blackberry. Once the devices have been bought through local venues, such as *Craigslist*, they are tested, wiped of data, cleaned, and resold to buyers throughout the United States via *eBay*. I advertise using a variety of mediums including *Craigslist*, flyers, business cards, *Google AdWords*, *Twitter*, *Facebook*, and very importantly, word of mouth. I have seen tremendous growth and in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2012 sold just under \$45,000 worth of devices. I provide a way for people to recycle their old electronics as they upgrade. They get cash for their device and I resell to another person who gives it new life. By buying local and reselling on a national market I am able to make a profit on most all devices. In 2012 I became a Top-Rated Seller and a Silver Power Seller on *eBay* as well as a Verified *PayPal* Member. This gave me distinct advantages over competitors including better placement in *eBay* search results, lower *eBay* fees, and lower shipping costs.

**Tell us about yourself and how you make your business succeed.**

*ElectroSage LLC* now consumes a great deal of my time. However, I continue to participate in a variety of other activities including Boy Scouts, swim team, various activities at my church (including serving at Mass) and, of course, school. These activities instilled in me the drive and discipline it takes for any entrepreneur to succeed.

In high school I take a full load of Honors Courses and have a cumulative 4.0 GPA. In Boy Scouts I was inducted into the National Scouting Honor Society (Order of the Arrow) at the age of thirteen and achieved the rank of Eagle at the age of fourteen. I have earned all three Eagle Palms (Bronze, Gold and Silver). I attended the 2010 National Scout Jamboree near Washington D.C. and the 2011 world Scout Jamboree in Rinkaby, Sweden meeting young people from all across the globe and experiencing many different cultures worldwide. My travels have brought me to Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Mexico, and Canada as well as 35 different states. I am a avid camper and outdoorsman with over 200 camping nights in and outside of the Scouting program including sailing Lake Superior, sailing the Florida Keys, hiking Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, hiking on the Big Island of Hawaii (including Mauna Kea), rafting the Yellowstone River in Montana (as well as camping in Yellowstone National Park)., and technical rock climbing, I am also proficient in Spanish, HTML, web and graphic design, photography and film development. The video submitted with this application was written, produced, filmed, and edited by myself.

**What are your future goals and vision for your business? How do you propose to develop your business?**

In the next year I will expand to offer a national wide buying network through my new website, which is currently in the design process. I also plan to expand by engaging others to buy devices locally in different cities throughout the U.S. This increased volume of devices will result in greater *eBay* sales. Beyond the next year I plan to establish a storefront where I can buy and sell devices locally.